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ABSTRACT

A follow-up survey was conducted of the 1978 Educational Quality Assessment (EQA) to ascertain what impact the Pennsylvania Statewide Assessment Program had on schools and school districts. The survey instrument consisted of 20 items tapping: (1) the quality of information and services provided; (2) dissemination activities engaged in by the district; (3) value in identifying problem areas; and (4) programmatic changes made. Survey responses were received from 88 percent of the school administrators participating in the 1978 assessment and are presented. EQA was found to play an important part in making decisions in areas such as changes in courses and teaching strategies. Often principals used EQA information to make decisions leading to revisions of existing programs or the development of new programs. Many respondents indicated that EQA provided data that confirmed a problem existed or called attention to problem areas not previously noted by the district staff. "Percentiles on student performance areas" and "scores compared to predicted range" were selected as the most useful type of scoring and statistics used in the school report, although all six options were selected by at least 50 of the 99 school administrators. (Author/RL)

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AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A LARGE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

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and

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Pennsylvania Department of Education

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ABSTRACT

A follow-up survey was conducted of the 1978 Educational Quality Assessment (EQA) to ascertain what impact the Pennsylvania Statewide Assessment Program had on schools and school districts. The survey instrument consisted of 20 items tapping: the quality of information and services provided, dissemination activities engaged in by the district, value in identifying problem areas, and programmatic changes made. Survey responses were received from 88 percent of the school administrators participating in the 1978 assessment. EQA was found to play an important part in making decisions in areas such as changes in courses and teaching strategies. Often principals used EQA information to make decisions leading to revisions of existing programs or the development of new programs. Many respondents indicated that EQA provided data that confirmed a problem existed or called attention to problem areas not previously noted by the district staff.

INTRODUCTION

During the 1977-78 school year, Pennsylvania's Educational Quality Assessment (EQA) initiated new instruments for all goal areas. The expanded instruments incorporated a stronger emphasis on the cognitive areas and a slight decrease in the affective areas. Also, the number of total items was increased to provide broader assessment coverage within each goal area measured. Along with the increase in items, matrix sampling was first introduced during the 1977-78 school year. Matrix sampling permitted eighth and eleventh grade students to complete the assessment questionnaires in one sitting of approximately two hours; whereas fifth grade students needed approximately two and one-half hours to complete the assessment--frequently administered over a two-day period.

Of Pennsylvania's 505 school districts, 113 volunteered to participate in the 1977-78 assessment. The number of schools and students assessed within the districts was:

Grade Level	Number of Schools	Number of Students
5	453	29,956
8	151	30,876
11	128	28,653
Total	732	89,485

All participating districts received their school reports from Division of Educational Quality Assessment staff members during the fall of 1978.

PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

EQA is designed to offer reliable statistical information about strengths and weaknesses of schools upon which school officials can base sound educational planning decisions. Schools are encouraged to use the data and results as they wish. EQA's major function is to provide schools with a point of reference for initiating a self-analysis of their program strengths and/or weaknesses.

EQA follow-up surveys are deemed important in order to ascertain what impact the data and information provided by the Division of EQA have on local school programs. Survey results were valuable for EQA in planning to better meet the needs of individual schools and school districts.

PROCEDURE

This follow-up survey was conducted among districts that participated in the March 1978 assessment. In August 1979, the Division of Educational Quality Assessment mailed a 20-item follow-up survey to superintendents of the 113 school districts that participated in 1978. Replies were received from 99 school districts, or 88 percent of the districts, by the end of November 1979.

A copy of the Follow-Up Survey is found in Appendix A to provide the exact item wording. Questions in the survey focused on: (1) extent of dissemination of EQA results, (2) usefulness of EQA data, and (3) contribution of EQA's "Resources for Improvement" packets.

FINDINGS

Through the 1978 follow-up survey it was reported that most districts received the initial interpretation of the EQA report at a school district site. The initial interpretation of the EQA report was received by districts as indicated by the responses to Question 1.

QUESTION 1. Initial interpretation of the EQA report was received:

Options	Number
At a regional workshop at (Shippensburg, Clarion, Harrisburg).	25
In your district by an EQA representative.	72
At a regional workshop and at a district site.	2

n = 99 school districts
n: number of school districts that responded to this question.

Following the first question, respondents were given instructions to respond to questions 2 and 3 if the school report was delivered at a regional workshop. If respondents indicated the school report was presented at a district site, they were then asked to answer questions 4 and 5.

Information on the knowledge gained through a regional workshop was gathered by question 2. All but one of the 27 respondents indicated the individuals attending a regional workshop were able to interpret the school report to the remaining staff.

Eighty-nine percent of the respondents were positive in their response to Question 3 on selecting a workshop presentation in the future. Comments made on this item are found in Appendix B. In general,

the regional workshops allowed participants to gain sufficient knowledge to interpret reports to school district staff members and would be the option selected in the future.

Two questions were presented to the 74 school districts that received their school report at a local site. Question 4 asked if the representative from EQA was thorough in their explanation of the EQA report. All respondents were positive on this item, thus indicating the EQA staff members are providing sufficient information when delivering school reports.

The other question for districts receiving the EQA report at a district site was on selecting this type of interpretation in the future. Except for one respondent, all responses were "yes." School districts reflected favorable attitudes in their comments on this item which are found in Appendix C.

A question was presented on the results provided by the EQA Student Questionnaire. Of the responses received, 98 percent indicated the results were either excellent or acceptable. This revealed a high level of satisfaction with the results provided by the EQA questionnaire. Comments on this item are found in Appendix D.

QUESTION 6. Did you find the results provided by the new EQA Student Questionnaire to be:

Option	Number	Percent
Excellent	36	36.4
Acceptable	61	61.6
Unacceptable	1	1.0
	1 (omit)	1.0

n = 99

The most useful type of scoring and statistics used in the school report were identified from a list supplied with Question 7. "Percentiles on student performance areas" and "scores compared to predicted range" were selected most frequently. However, all options were selected by at least 50 of the 99 respondents.

QUESTION 7. Which of the following items in the report did you find useful? (Check as many as appropriate.)

Option	Number	Percent[a]
Percentiles on student performance areas	87	87.9
Scores compared to predicted ranges	89	89.9
Condition variable data	50	50.5
Item data for condition variables	58	58.6
Criterion-referenced information	56	56.6
Item data for student performance areas	56	66.7

n = 99

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

Information was gathered on how easy the school report was to understand and whether the report provided sufficient information. Respondents selected a point on a continuum that traversed from "easy to understand" to "dirficult to understand." Most replies indicated the school report was easy to understand. Respondents also selected a point on a continuum of "not sufficient" to "too extensive"--based on information presented in the school report. There was a slight tendency for replies to favor the "too extensive" end of the continuum. In general, the responses indicated school reports were easy for most people to understand and contained an appropriate amount of information.

QUESTION 8. The information presented in the school report is:

	Option Part 1	Number	Percent
Easy to Understand	1	19	19.2
	2	44	44.4
	3	20	20.2
	4	7	7.1
	5	4	4.0
	6	2	2.0
Difficult to Understand	7	0	0.0
		3 (omits)	3.0

n = 99

	Option Part 2	Number	Percent
Not Sufficient	1	1	1.0
	2	1	1.0
	3	4	4.0
	4	56	56.6
	5	17	17.2
	6	4	4.0
Too Extensive	7	0	0.0
		16 (omits)	16.2

n = 99

Through the follow-up study, it was also found that EQA results were widely disseminated. The assessment results were disseminated to various categories of publics and organizations with the following noted most frequently: school board members, principals, central office staff, and teachers. Under "Other," several groups were listed including: long-range planning committee, citizens' advisory committee, and the community through local news media.

QUESTION 9. To whom have your assessment results been disseminated? (Check as many as appropriate.)

Option	Number	Percent[a]
School board members	98	99.0
Principals	99	100.0
Central office staff	89	89.9
Most elementary teachers	90	90.9
Most middle/junior H.S. teachers	83	83.8
Most high school teachers	87	87.9
Local service clubs (Lions, Jaycees, etc.)	4	4.0
PTA, PTO, any parent group	47	47.5
Students	17	17.2
General public	67	67.7
Other	11	11.1
None	0	0.0

n = 99

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

It was found that EQA information is being widely shared with groups through different dissemination methods. Dissemination strategies included many different approaches such as newsletters, press releases, in-service presentations, school board meetings and faculty meetings. The two methods used most frequently were school board meetings and faculty meetings. Under the option of "regular meeting with" respondents included: long-range plan committees, administrators and citizen advisory committees.

QUESTION 10. What methods have been used to inform others about the EQA results? (Mark as many as are appropriate.)

Option	Number	Percent[a]
Faculty memorandum	28	28.3
School district newsletter	53	53.5
Press release	56	56.6
Special written report	22	22.2
Curriculum bulletin	4	4.0
In-service presentations	65	65.6
School board meeting	90	90.9
Faculty meeting	85	85.8
PTA presentation	34	34.3
Special presentation	21	21.2
Regular meeting with _____	12	12.1
Other	4	4.0
None	0	0.0

n = 99

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

Over 88 percent of the districts indicated that EQA information was used by building administrators to make decisions about their buildings and programs. Also, over 70 percent of the districts indicated that--as a result of EQA information--revisions of existing programs are underway. Only 3 percent of the school districts reported that they had not, as yet, used the EQA data. Information usage varied in the responses for "Other" from confirming results of other tests to stimulating an evaluation of problem areas.

QUESTION 11. Which of the following describe the use made of the EQA information? (Check as many as appropriate.)

Option	Number	Percent[a]
The information has not, as yet, been used.	3	3.0
The information was used to favorably reflect our present programs.	53	53.5
The information was used by individual principals to make decisions about their buildings and programs.	88	88.9
The information served as a basis for teacher in-service activity.	66	66.7
Revisions of some existing programs are underway as a result of information.	70	70.7
A new program is being planned for one or more of our schools as a result of the information.	24	24.2
A new program has been "tried out" in one of our schools as a result of the information.	13	13.1
A new program has been incorporated into one school's program as a result of the information.	9	9.1
A new program has been incorporated into several of our schools as a result of the information.	10	10.1
Other:	7	7.1

n = 99

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

More than three out of five districts felt that EQA data had an influence on "changes in course content" and "changes in teaching strategies." Based on responses to Question 12, school districts are often influenced by EQA when making such changes.

QUESTION 12. Which of the following can you attribute, at least in part, to information received from EQA? (Check as many as appropriate.)

Option	Number	Percent[a]
Changes in course offerings	34	34.3
Changes in course content	63	63.6
Changes in teaching strategies	60	60.6
Changes in teaching assignments	12	12.1
Changes in financial allocations	17	17.2
Changes in school facilities	9	9.1
Other changes:	6	6.1

n = 99

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

Sixty-eight districts responded to the item on their teachers making use of EQA data. Of the districts responding, the average district percentage for teachers making use of EQA data was about 52 percent. All school districts responding to the item reported at least some teachers making use of EQA information. Respondents not completing this item often noted they were unsure of the correct percentage of teachers.

QUESTION 13A. What proportion of your teachers have made use of the EQA data?

Percent Reported	School Districts Reporting in the Range
5-20	7
25-40	16
45-60	23
65-80	15
85-100	7
	31 (omits)

n = 99

A second part of Question 13 asked if greater teacher utilization of data was desirable. Two-thirds of the school districts reported that greater teacher utilization of the EQA data would be desirable. This figure probably would have been even higher if the 16 districts omitting the item had responded.

QUESTION 13B. Is greater teacher utilization of data desirable?

Option	Number	Percent
Yes	66	66.7
No	17	17.2
	16 (omits)	16.1

n = 99

The last part of Question 13 was concerned with how EQA can assist in having teachers utilize data. Comments from school representatives are recorded in Appendix E. There were many different attitudes on this item. Comments ranged from this being a local function to requesting in-service work by the Educational Quality Assessment staff. Many districts favored using EQA resource packets and EQA staff interpretation sessions.

School district employees often suspect that problems exist, but they do not have reliable data to support those contentions. Over 82 percent of the districts reported that EQA provided them with data that confirmed a problem existed, or that EQA data called attention to problem areas not previously noted by the district staff. This was important to the EQA staff, since assisting school districts in confirming problems and locating problem areas are an essential part of the assessment program.

QUESTION 14. The EQA information:

Option	Percent
a. Called attention to a problem area not previously noted by district staff.	9.1
b. Confirmed suspicions about district problems.	45.4
c. Did not identify any serious problems.	17.2
Both a and b.	15.2
Both b and c.	10.1
Both a and c.	2.0
a, b and c.	1.0

n = 99

Of the 99 school districts responding, 98 considered the EQA program to be at least "useful" in helping to make decisions. In addition, over 30 percent of these districts indicated EQA was "very useful" in helping them to make decisions.

QUESTION 15. How do you consider the EQA program as a means of helping you make decisions?

Option	Number	Percent
Very useful	30	30.3
Useful	67	67.7
Not very useful	2	2.0
Useless	0	0.0

n = 99

Information was gathered on a series of publications made available to school districts which were called "Resource for Improvement" packets. Exactly one-half of the districts responding indicated they had requested at least one of the packets. This indicates that the single memorandum offering the packets, perhaps, was overlooked by many districts. Many school districts did, however, attempt to implement follow-up work based

on an analysis of their EQA results. Only districts that requested resource packets were told to answer Questions 17 and 18. All districts were instructed to respond to Questions 19 and 20.

QUESTION 16. Did you or your staff request any of these packets?

Option	Number	Percent
Yes	48	48.5
No	48	48.5
	3 (omits)	3.0

n = 99

Over 79 percent of the 48 districts requesting resource packets made use of the information. For respondents who indicated they did not make use of the packet, an additional question was posed--"Why?" The responses are found in Appendix F for the first part of Question 17.

QUESTION 17. Were the packets used? ___Yes ___No If no, why?

Option	Number	Percent
Yes	38	79.2
No	7	14.6
	3 (omits)	6.2

n = 48

Districts that responded with "no" in part 1 of Question 17 were asked in part 2 if they expected to use the packet in the current school year. The responses for part 2 are found in Appendix G. Only one school district indicated the resource packets would not be used in the current school year. All others indicated they would be used.

Districts that responded with "yes" in part 1 of Question 17 were asked in part 3 who used the packets and how they were used. Administrators, curriculum coordinators, counselors, teachers and students were listed as having used the resource packets. How the packets were used varied, but most responses were related to curriculum work. Comments for part 3 are found in Appendix H.

Question 18 asked which part of the packet respondents found useful. Part 5, "Classroom activities and improvement strategies," was most often indicated as being useful, but the other parts were almost as frequently marked as being useful.

QUESTION 18. Which part of the packet did you find useful? (Check as many as appropriate.)

Part	Content	Number	Percent[a]
1.	Goal statement, goal rationale, measurement rationale, scale description and scoring	16	76.2
2.	Validated projects	14	66.7
3.	Selected resources	17	81.0
4.	Practices and programs from EQA selections of long-range plans	17	81.0
5.	Classroom activities and improvement strategies	18	85.7

n = 21

[a]Percentages when totaled will exceed 100 percent due to school districts selecting more than one option.

QUESTION 19. What type of assistance would you like from PDE to supplement the initial EQA interpretation session?

Twenty-two districts responded to Question 19. About 40 percent of these districts indicated they were satisfied with the assistance

provided by EQA, or that no assistance was required. The other comments dealt with various follow-up activities including on-site visits, providing specific suggestions and workshops for administrators. All comments are found in Appendix I.

QUESTION 20. Comment on the value of EQA.

Over 90 percent of the 82 districts responding to this question indicated EQA provided them with valuable information. Districts commented that EQA was important in formulating short and long range plans and that EQA assisted in evaluating both affective and cognitive areas. Most of these districts felt the EQA program was educationally sound, useful and relevant to their programs for educational change and development. All responses for this item are found in Appendix J.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ninety-nine of the 113 school districts that participated in the assessment responded to the follow-up survey. The survey was designed to gather information on the EQA program and to obtain suggestions for program planning.

School districts were satisfied with interpretation sessions at both regional workshops and local school district sites. Almost every respondent indicated the EQA staff member thoroughly explained the material at the interpretation session. Only three of the districts who participated said they would not select a regional workshop for future interpretation sessions.

The results provided by EQA were categorized as either "Excellent" or "Acceptable" by 98 percent of the school districts. This general acceptance of results was substantiated by districts indicating approval of statistics used in school reports.

EQA information continues to be widely disseminated to many persons, agencies, mass media and other organizations via many different methods and techniques.

A majority of the districts indicated that the EQA program was helpful in conducting a needs assessment and providing them with pertinent information and comparative data which were not otherwise available. EQA was an important part of district decisions on changes in courses and teaching strategies. EQA was often used by principals to make decisions about their buildings and programs, resulting in revisions of existing programs or the development of new programs.

EQA was considered to be "Useful" or "Very useful" in decision making by 98 percent of the districts. This was emphasized when over 66 percent of the respondents indicated greater teacher utilization of the data was desirable. It was reported that about 52 percent of the teachers use EQA data.

About one-half of the districts requested resource packets for selected goal areas. Most districts reported the packets were used and that the "Classroom activities and improvement strategies" section was most useful; however, all other sections of the resource packet were considered to be almost as useful.

Several districts indicated they would like assistance from PDE to supplement the initial interpretation session. Suggestions for assistance included the following: schedule visitations by PDE curriculum specialists, provide specific suggestions and recommendations to improve weak areas, identify schools that have excellent programs and provide in-service programs. Other districts indicated the follow-up activities provided by EQA were satisfactory or that no additional assistance was required.

Comments on the value of EQA indicated an overwhelming positive attitude toward the program. EQA was considered to be helpful when evaluating school programs that are not evaluated by regular testing instruments. In general, the 1978 EQA program was successful in meeting its stated purposes and in providing valuable assessment services to participating school districts in Pennsylvania.

APPENDIX A

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT (EQA)
FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

District_____

Name_____

Position_____

Educational Quality Assessment (EQA)
Follow-up Survey

1. Initial interpretation of the EQA report was received:

___ a. at a regional workshop (Shippensburg, Clarion or Harrisburg).
___ b. in your district by an EQA representative.

If a, answer questions 2 and 3. If b, go on to items 4 and 5.

2. Did the persons attending the regional workshop return with sufficient knowledge to interpret the reports to the remaining staff? Yes___ No___ If no, why?

3. Would you choose this type of initial interpretation in the future? Yes___ No___ Why?

Go to item 6.

4. Was the EQA representative thorough enough in his/her explanation of the report? Yes___ No___

5. Would you choose this type of initial interpretation in the future? Yes___ No___ Why? If no, what other methods would you suggest?

6. Did you find the results provided by the new EQA Student Questionnaire to be:

___ a. excellent
___ b. acceptable
___ c. unacceptable

List any problems encountered.

7. Which of the following items in the report did you find useful? (Check as many as appropriate.)

___ a. Percentiles on student performance areas
___ b. Scores compared to predicted range
___ c. Condition variable data
___ d. Item data for condition variables
___ e. Criterion-referenced information
___ f. Item data for student performance areas

8. The information presented in the school report is:

Easy to understand |_____|_____|_____|_____|_____| Difficult to understand

Not sufficient |_____|_____|_____|_____|_____| Too extensive

9. To whom have your assessment results been disseminated? (Check as many as appropriate.)

___ a. school board members
___ b. principals
___ c. central office staff
___ d. most elementary teachers
___ e. most middle/junior H.S. teachers
___ f. most high school teachers
___ g. local service clubs (Lions, Jaycees, etc.)
___ h. PTA, PTO, any parent group
___ i. students
___ j. general public
___ k. other_____
___ l. none

10. What methods have been used to inform others about the EQA results? (Mark as many as are appropriate.)

___ a. faculty memorandum
___ b. school district newsletter
___ c. press release
___ d. special written report
___ e. curriculum bulletin
___ f. inservice presentations
___ g. school board meeting
___ h. faculty meeting
___ i. PTA presentation
___ j. special presentation
___ k. regular meeting with _____
___ l. other
___ m. none

11. Which of the following describe the use made of the EQA information? (Check as many as appropriate.)

___ a. The information has not, as yet, been used.
___ b. The information was used to favorably reflect our present programs.
___ c. The information was used by individual principals to make decisions about their buildings and programs.
___ d. The information served as a basis for teacher inservice activity.

___ e. Revisions of some existing programs are underway as a result of information.
___ f. A new program is being planned for one or more of our schools as a result of the information.
___ g. A new program has been "tried out" in one of our schools as a result of the information.
___ h. A new program has been incorporated into one school's program as a result of the information.
___ i. A new program has been incorporated into several of our schools as a result of the information.
___ j. Other:

12. Which of the following can you attribute at least in part to information received from EQA? (Check as many as appropriate.)

___ a. changes in course offerings
___ b. changes in course content
___ c. change in teaching strategies
___ d. changes in teaching assignments
___ e. changes in financial allocations
___ f. changes in school facilities
___ g. other changes:

13. What proportion of your teachers have made use of the EQA data? ____%

Is greater teacher utilization of data desirable? ___Yes ___No

If yes, how can EQA assist in the task?

14. The EQA information:

___ a. called attention to a problem area not previously noted by district staff.
___ b. confirmed suspicions about district problems.
___ c. did not identify any serious problems.

15. How do you consider the EQA program as a means of helping you make decisions?

___ a. very useful
___ b. useful
___ c. not very useful
___ d. useless

In March, a memo offering Resource for Improvement packets was sent to superintendents of districts participating in the 1978 assessment.

16. Did you or your staff request any of these packets? Yes___ No___

If yes, answer items 17 and 18 below:

17. Were the packets used? ___Yes ___No If no, why?

If no, do you expect to use in the current school year?

If yes, by whom and how?

18. Which part of the packet did you find useful? (Check as many as appropriate.) ___1 ___2 ___3 ___4 ___5

19. What type of assistance would you like from PDE to supplement the initial EQA interpretation session?

20. Comment on the value of EQA.

APPENDIX B
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 3

3. Would you choose this type of initial interpretation in the future? Why?

Comments

- Not sure. Sometimes the visit from a representative of EQA has a greater impact on the administration involved than "another report" from someone already in the district.
- It was very informative.
- It gave the participants adequate background to properly utilize the results.
- Knowledgeable persons imparted necessary facts and other information effectively.
- Providing person attending workshop has knowledge of EQA and statistics. If not, a district meeting would be preferable.
- Yes, for use as a general survey approach.
- More opportunity to question in depth any part of the assessment and get logical answers.
- With current background of local people it may not be necessary: quite a lot of questions were not well answered.
- It enabled us to be better prepared for the "in-district" presentation.
- There is ample time and you are away from district interruptions.
- Too time consuming. District personnel are familiar with EQA format and interpretation.
- Larger group usually generates questions and discussion which may be overlooked during a district interpretation.
- We would like to have an opportunity for more of our people to attend.

APPENDIX C
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 5

5. Would you choose this type of initial interpretation in the future? Why? If no, what other methods would you suggest?

Comments

- Convenience.
- The personal explanation and interpretation was very valuable.
- A very personal approach.
- Present information to staff (in-service?).
- Excellent explanation and answering of questions.
- We received EQA results by attending the Shippensburg Conference. This obviously was a superior way to the one-day meeting in the district.
- In addition, I would arrange for principals and teacher representatives to attend.
- Good experience. We tape session. All administrators attend and ask questions.
- We were able to have members of staff present, something that would not be possible at a regional meeting.
- Personalized.
- This method seems most effective to me because our administrators were able to ask questions and get immediate response in terms of interpretation and significance of data.
- Informal, relaxed atmosphere with only district personnel present. Zero in on more specific areas.

APPENDIX D
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 6

6. Did you find the results provided by the new EQA Student Questionnaire to be: ...List any problems encountered.

Comments

- Apparent problems in filling out student forms made results questionable.
- Would have preferred answers to specific questions rather than groupings from items such as parental and teacher groupings. Would like to pinpoint the problem.
- In part, we made our own by not making the teachers complete their portion of the questionnaire. In part, the problem was the construction of that portion of the test--negatively worded. This lack of information altered the amount of feedback possible.
- No problems, in fact, all questions were answered satisfactorily.
- Questions were raised in a negative fashion. Suggest that in the future they be stated in a positive manner.
- I still question some of the methods of data collection.
- In our last experience, there were unexplained "low" scores for our school which made interpretation difficult. These unusual scores were not easily explained away, since other standardized testing results stayed up with other schools.

APPENDIX E
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 13

13. What proportion of your teachers have made use of the EQA data? ___%
Is greater teacher utilization of data desirable? ___Yes ___No
If yes, how can EQA assist in the task?

Comments

- The packets mentioned in items #16, 17 and 18 are sufficient.
- Local problem.
- I'm not sure EQA can. This problem seems to be strictly a district circumstance.
- Not sure at this time.
- Should be solved within system.
- Additional presentation to individual buildings.
- It is a local function. EQA should be available for consulting help.
- By detailing more specifics for teachers in strategies.
- Not sure.
- Provide in-depth use of EQA.
- Difficult to say.
- By assisting local districts with in-service programs.
- Provide additional follow-up materials.
- By presenting an interpretation of the results to the entire faculty.
- EQA need do no more.
- Data needs to be presented in more simple terms--computer printouts bring out negative attitudes in many people. Also, data needs to allow teachers to go back and look at specific questions and areas without the difficulty of dealing with large quantities of paper. Reports could be broken into individual areas or subjects.

APPENDIX E
CONTINUED

Comments

- Provide more packets.
- Provide assistance at in-service days by explaining nature and background of EQA to staff.
- We must do it ourselves at present.
- Not certain.
- More teacher information and their relationships to EQA.
- EQA cannot assist. It must be done at the local level by district personnel.
- Convince staff of the validity of the testing.
- Have member of EQA team present information to staff varied levels (el., ms., hs.).
- That is a school district responsibility!
- Principals are still working on this.
- Elaborate on the teaching strategies booklets.
- Explanation by people from your office.
- Our problem is more local, i.e., to have sufficient in-service time and curriculum leadership to do or use what is already there.
- EQA should continue to develop strategies to help teachers to interpret the information easily and accurately.
- Greater breakdown of data. Permit requests for correlational studies.
- District will complete assessment this year. It is a local thrust not necessary for additional state involvement.
- By breaking down items according to specific curriculum implications.
- Not sure.

APPENDIX E
CONTINUED

Comments

- No definite opinion on EQA service in this regard at present.
- Come when requested (as you do).
- A.V. presentations (DE produced) showing examples of teacher use of EQA data would be valuable.
- Offer recommendations to improve areas of weakness that have been effective for other districts.
- Representative from state meet with faculty.
- Resource consultants.
- Get more credibility. The data, even good results, are looked at skeptically.
- Additional assistance in test interpretation. More complete suggestions on how to implement needed changes, e.g., citizenship, preparation for a changing world.
- Information as to how to transfer EQA results into teaching strategies changes.
- Workshop to share strategies and programs found to be workable in other schools.
- More EQA consultants in district. More copies of results--at least two copies per building.
- Local problem.

APPENDIX F
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 17, PART 1

17. Were the packets used? ___Yes ___No If no, why?

Comments

- Have not had time as of this date.
- Building principals have been sent a memo outlining what is available. We are awaiting requests.
- No interest outside the central office and the principals office.
- Not received!
- Packets requested have not been received.
- Reserved for future in-service.
- With a desegregation plan, the Long Range Plan, and substantial moving within the district, these packets were not used at the end of last year.

APPENDIX G
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 17, PART 2

17. If no, do you expect to use in the current school year?

Comments

- Yes
- Yes
- Yes. Several came too late in the year to be used. They will be used this year.
- If received.
- Yes
- No

APPENDIX H
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 17, PART 3

17. If yes, by whom and how?

Comments

- Elementary supervisor, reading supervisor, building principals, coordinator for instruction.
- Elementary supervisor and assistant superintendent.
- Curriculum department
- Administrative and guidance staff
- Principals and various building committees as well as central office staff
- Counselors, administrators
- Central office staff. To project possible future curriculum change.
- Under direction of principals and coordinators
- Superintendent and principals
- Teachers
- Teachers, administrators, students
- By principals but only superficially so far as a part of discussion at faculty meetings
- Building principals in cooperation with staff members
- Principals and teachers particularly elementary
- Administrators, curriculum supervisors
- By administration and staff
- Building principals
- By instructional leaders, principals, and teachers to determine where certain modifications of curriculum might be warranted.
- By curriculum coordinators and building principals in identifying strategies for change. By central office staff when presenting follow-up information to staff.

APPENDIX H
CONTINUED

Comments

- Packets were distributed to principals and were used as a basis for discussion at districtwide administrative meetings.
- Utilization by principals during interpretation meetings with faculty.
- By teachers, coordinators and principals to design units, methods and programs to complete our curriculum revision.
- English teachers, health and physical education teachers
- Coordination of testing program with teachers and principals
- Language arts - reference, social studies - reference, career education - proposal writing
- Administrative staff. To implement strategies for correcting areas of weakness determined by EQA testing.
- Principals and superintendent for review
- Principals working with curriculum committees
- Packets were received by the elementary principal. Used in developing new ideas in curriculum planning.
- Curriculum coordinator, principals, teachers
- Principals received appropriate copies to share with their staff
- Staff committees and resource people
- Principals and staff members to determine strategies to deal with areas of weaknesses.
- By principals for local school in-service work.

INDEX I
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 19

19. What type of assistance would you like from PDE to supplement the initial EQA interpretation session?

Comments

- None at present.
- None at the present time.
- Any and all assistance would be appreciated. Nothing specific.
- As need arises, we will make contact.
- None
- None at this time.
- We're well satisfied with what we've gotten.
- Assistance is now supplemented by IU staff - adequate.
- No specific suggestions.
- Assistance has been available when questions arose.
- Total interpretation to the entire faculty.
- None appears necessary.
- No additional assistance necessary.
- On-site visitations by PDE curriculum specialists to work with small groups of teachers
- An offering of the interpretation session at IU each time EQA results are available.
- I thought the August 1978 interpretation session was "right on."
- None
- Those areas cited in #13.
- In areas of weakness where we would like to upgrade our program, the PDE could provide following: (a) Schools that have been identified as having excellent programs; (b) Available in-service programs and where offered; (c) Colleges offering seminars in the areas desired; (d) Any other available resource materials.

INDEX I
CONTINUED

Comments

- Continuous up-date if possible
- None
- Advice as to what school districts are doing to improve in the assessment areas that are primarily affective in nature.
- None I can think of.
- Variable relationships; more specific information.
- None necessary
- The resource packets should fill the void nicely.
- Follow-up
- None at this time
- I think the EQA program functions well in its present format. The important thing has to be the availability of help when needed.
- Provide specific suggestions and recommendations to improve weak areas.
- None
- Presentations to school boards
- None at the present time
- Continued help from Pennsylvania Department of Education would be appreciated, especially with the statistical interpretation to be given to the results.
- None required
- No further suggestions. Presentation was well done.
- I think you should be congratulated on EQA and what it tries to do. But be straight and plain speaking about its weaknesses so they can be considered when being used constructively.
- On call for questions
- PR from the PDE would be most helpful in enlisting public understanding of the EQA program.

APPENDIX I
CONTINUED

Comments

- Would hope that interpretation session would point out some trends and give inferences to district personnel concerning results.
- Follow-up by district visit
- Liked Section 5 of the packets--excellent.
- None
- Assistance requested was provided.
- Pre-review of the test would be helpful.
- A follow-up visit on request would be helpful.
- None at this time
- Workshops or training sessions for principals and subject supervisors to help them plan in-service programs. We were planning to attend the Executive Academy on that topic last year, but it did not materialize.

APPENDIX J
COMMENTS ON QUESTION 20

20. Comments on the value of EQA.

Comments

- It is difficult to compare EQA tests, i.e., 1973-1975-1978.
- Good experience
- Excellent process for self assessment and to continuously focus on goals, long range planning and thus improvement
- It is another valuable evaluation tool for the district to use when assessing programs.
- The EQA has been helpful to me as a new superintendent, it gives me some direction toward improvement of districts' problems.
- One of the few states who provide service--very pleased.
- Should be continually improved, updated and continued.
- In and of itself, not too bad but when tied to long range planning and Project 81 - trouble.
- The validity of the results is questionable.
- Worthwhile - serves as a good objective assessment tool.
- I don't have much confidence in the results on some of the affective goals. The information in the cognitive domain and the condition variables has proven very helpful.
- EQA allows comparative data within expected bands - allows critical evaluation and ability to change.
- Useful, informative. Should be continued.
- Worthwhile
- One of the most important additions to Pennsylvania's education program in years
- We particularly appreciate two comparisons which only EQA testing define for us: (1) The knowledge of what the average Pennsylvania student has achieved or feels in several areas; (2) The predicted range of attainment as developed from the many socioeconomic variables which are considered.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- Extremely valuable when conducting a needs assessment
- EQA is a valuable instrument for long- and short-range curriculum planning. However, the predicted band ranges run the danger of leading to an acceptance of the status quo.
- I think there is general satisfaction with EQA. I believe it has a real future, especially if it can be made compatible with the thrust for competency requirements. I would like to see the latter compromised more toward the EQA movement. Many more local decisions can be made with EQA data than what appears to be the case in the minimum competency movement.
- It has merit in pointing out attitudinal areas of students and staff. Useful in part, has its place, but should not be over emphasized in evaluating the total local educational scene.
- No additional comments
- Worthwhile and should be continued.
- Think it is very useful with excellent statistical treatment. In the hands of persons not familiar with statistics and correlations, some misuse of results could occur.
- EQA was very helpful in conveying useful information about our schools to our parents, faculty and students. We use EQA to improve educational program offerings for all students.
- Every three years the EQA is an acceptable assessment to make to try and correlate it with a district's achievement test results.
- We recommend the continuation of EQA with improvement in data presentation, but definitely not toward statewide competency rating.
- Assists the school district in evaluating the affective areas in our school district and supplemental information in certain cognitive areas.
- Excellent avenue for school districts to update, revise or add to curriculum. I, as one, wish that EQA continues as a tool for evaluation.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- One means of data collection that, combined with district data, gives a picture of district. Low percentiles disturbed parents more than teachers who see little value in one test score.

- We have found the EQA tests to be helpful in setting our priorities. The results, when interpreted properly, are an aid for planning.

- It has some value as a criterion-reference instrument, but should not be the basis for a competency examination imposed statewide, nor should it be the total basis for analysis of a school district. As an additional indicator, it is useful, but not a final or total indicator.

- I feel it's valuable for both faculty and administrators and should be continued.

- Assisted us in our program development by providing data we many times stated but didn't have proof. EQA provided the proof.

- Provides a basis of comparison with similar districts. Provides an opportunity for our district to take a look at ourselves.

- Information excellent. School districts implementation values???

- Good - excellent

- Provides an additional tool for program evaluation at the local level.

- The value is well worth the time and effort spent on it.

- Yes, very important, will utilize more and more.

- Good

- We have found it to be extremely useful and beneficial in pointing out areas which need "propping up."

- Useful

- I think EQA has been a useful tool. Our school district has always done well on a comparison basis--it has supported our premises and helped to point out deficiencies and areas of concern.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- Value is being obscured by outsiders thru pressure groups. PR program is required from state and local level. Test should be required of everyone if it is to be used. Student options should not be given.

- Elementary--indication of strengths and weaknesses with opportunity for improvement of deficient areas. Middle School--an evaluative tool to assess the quality and effectiveness of a school program. High School--no value.

- Useful as an additional monitoring device for a district.

- Good pulse taker. Valuable when item analysis is pursued. Surprised staff with student reaction (+) to their school programs.

- I believe it's a good tool. To be effective in Long Range Planning, the changing of the tests should be avoided.

- Worthwhile--We have participated three times in EQA. Although I understand reasons for changing, it would be more helpful if more direct comparisons could be made with previous test.

- EQA is an attempt to set some goals for our schools. Some of the goals cannot be achieved by the school alone. I would continue EQA, and continue to simplify and improve it.

- Excellent tool and we plan to continue utilizing EQA services.

- None

- Excellent program. We appreciate the information we get.

- The EQA provides emphasis, unlike the usual standardized tests, in that concentration is given to probable causes of deficiencies, and emphasis is placed beyond achievement of academics, to measures related to attitudes. These factors are felt to substantiate the values of the EQA.

- Of high value for comparative data. EQA should become more criterion-referenced as plans unfold for Project 81.

- Assessment/evaluation if used in proper manner is always valuable tool.

- I would like to see it continue.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- I believe EQA to be one of the most useful services which we receive from the Department of Education.

- A very good evaluation tool. It should be continued especially to give three-year follow through. Very helpful in reporting to non-educators.

- The EQA has served as a tool to evaluate our curriculum offerings and teach strategies. Through this assessment, we have had a chance to view our individual schools with a perspective not available before. This is a third time we have participated, and each session has had a positive impact; i.e., we have added an instructional materials center to our middle school, partially because of the results of this instrument. As a result of this new facility, students of our middle school and high school have greatly benefited. We certainly appreciated the interpretation of the EQA, and we implemented programs in the true spirit of the program. This service is certainly worthwhile when carried out as intended.

- Provides an evaluation instrument to be considered when analyzing the curriculum; some teachers used it to reconcile behavior of some pupils toward their school; some teachers used it to satisfy their professional attitudes and concerns; some teachers used it to reinforce learning and/or to motivate their pupils.

- It is helpful when trying to evaluate parts of the school program that are not evaluated by our regular testing program. However, since the EQA changes drastically from one administration to the next, it is difficult to get a long-range assessment in some areas. The other problem we have is that the students results fluctuate so much from one test administration to the next that the results are sometimes useless or at least minimized.

- Revisions made have been most helpful, and have substantially improved both the utility and credibility of EQA. This is proving to be an increasingly useful tool in the evaluation of schools and their effectiveness.

- The specifics are much more valuable than the percentiles or general information.

- Excellent - please include us in the next assessment.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- EQA has flaws, but results are as valuable as district has time to use them effectively. We have a long way to go to really use the results to their maximum. Time and administrative staff-the problem.

- EQA is our only source of data for the affective areas. In this sense, it is serving a purpose.

- Excellent objectives, not enough follow-up utilizing IU potential.

- Although I cannot point to specific changes or improvements as a result of EQA, I do find the entire format useful as an independent means of providing information from students and teachers. I am highly pleased with EQA as used in our latest participation. Data presentation was excellent.

- Excellent tool for evaluation and improvement.

- EQA results cause us some difficulties since our curriculum does not coincide with expectations of EQA testing.

- The EQA results were valuable for our Long Range Plans and a means of presenting both strengths and weaknesses of our district.

- We have participated in every EQA. We want to continue. We find them excellent and extremely helpful.

- EQA results do not lend themselves to easy interpretation by the general public.

- Another technique to take-a-look-see at your present offerings to make curriculum decisions.

- EQA has verified findings which we had already determined and started appropriate changes to improve courses as well as content.

- Moderate. Supplements district data. It will always be limited in its utility until instrument and norms allow for longitudinal comparisons. Matrix sampling is indefensible as a sampling technique with small groups of students, i.e., a single class of 18-21 in a grade tested.

- EQA is of value to our district. It provides another tool to assist us in evaluating and revising program.

APPENDIX J
CONTINUED

Comments

- Find that EQA results, as most testing programs, confirms what is already known or suspected. Some difficulty encountered in determining effect in follow-up procedures in areas of weakness.

- We perceive this as one of several tools in decision making.

- Excellent effort and good tool for motivation of staff.

- In this district, we find that EQA helps us to take a more objective look at programs, their impacts and needs. We are always keenly aware of staff responses in examining attitudes and possible ways to improve relationships with peers, administrators and community. We find that our students' performance in the academic portions of the test correlate with scores on other standardized tests. We further find that it is difficult to institute formalized programs in citizenship per se. We appreciate EQA because it is an indicator of how our students respond in comparison with others across the Commonwealth in a variety of situations and circumstances. Results do point up some areas which should be improved. EQA provides a starting point for change for program improvement.

- Useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses of our total educational program and making adjustments accordingly.

- Appropriate instrument to periodically survey our community, programs, students and achievement.

- Excellent for our district because the data along with standardized achievement test results have been very helpful in assessing the status of our recent desegregation/integration program and the district attendance area reorganized.

- EQA provides data which is helpful to us in evaluating current curricula, planning programs and developing new curriculum.

- Much of the information obtained through EQA would not be available to us through other sources. We have standardized test results; however, many of the goals included in EQA are not included in standardized tests.